



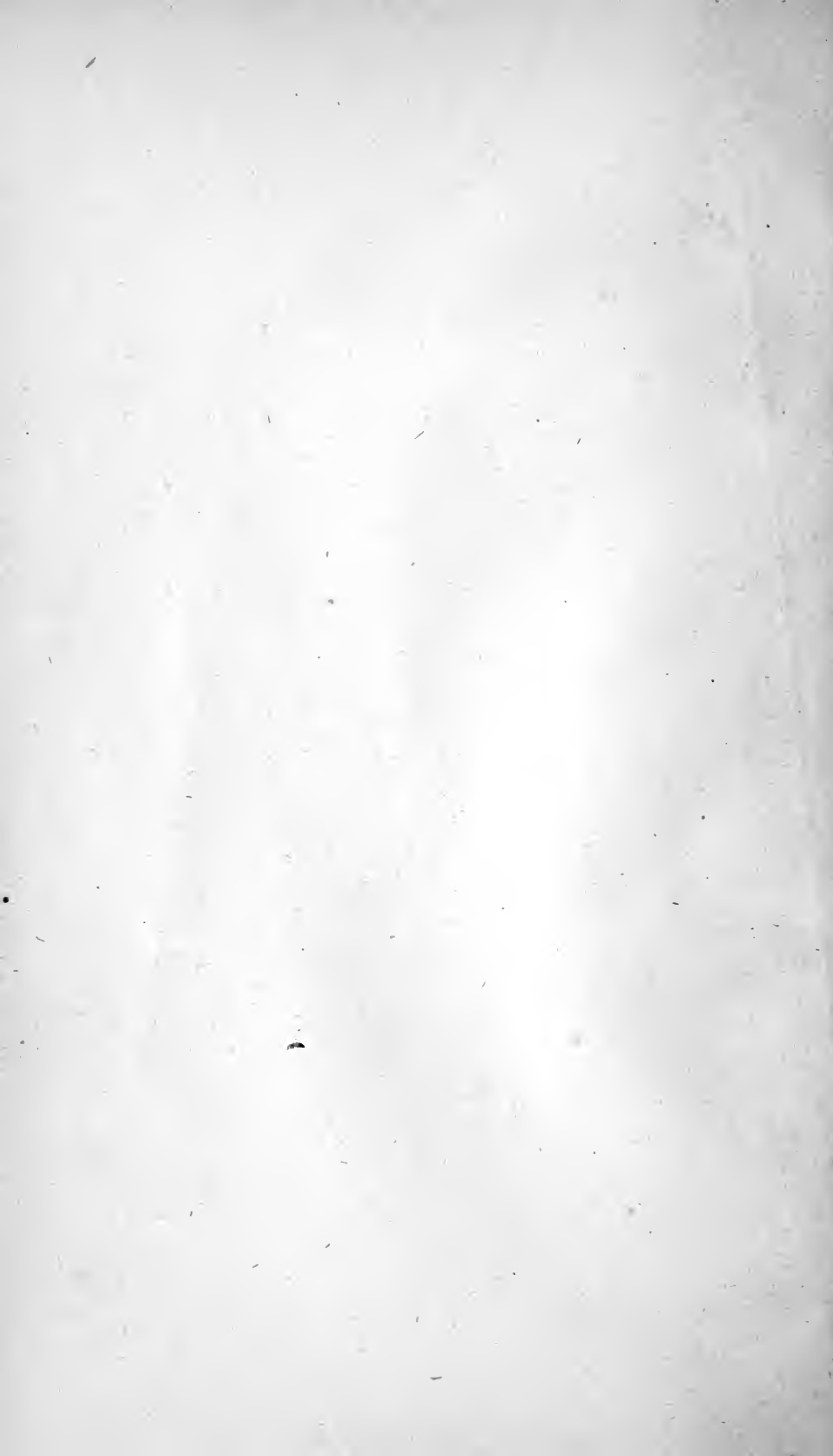
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THE

CENTURY-PLANT,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

Mrs. M. O. Johnson.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"LINWOOD; OR, THE CHRISTMAS GIFT," &c.

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1867

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THE CENTURY PLANT.

THY voice, through years of storm and strife,
hath led

The nation safely on ;

And when the glowing words "Be Free" were said,

Thou to thy rest wert gone !

But from thy grave, as from the cleft rock, springs

The fountain of the free ;

And in the future's vista shines thy name,

Inwrought with liberty.

In thy life's work and close, the fable old

Is fitly clothed anew ;

And to all generations shall unfold

A meaning deep and true.

Now, on that life's all beautiful evangel,

Fraught with the worn heart's weal,

When written to the full, hath God's strong angel

Impressed his fire-wrought seal.

Long years of struggling will and burning thought,

The bondman's grief and thrall,

And what the heart of Christ in man hath wrought,

Have culminated all !

Yes : we who loved thee, watched the blossoming

Of thy life's earnest hour,

Forgetting that its ripening were its fall, —

Lincoln, our Aloe-Flower !

With tears and smiles, the nation gathers up
The stainless petals cast;
And, in the heart's herbarium, evermore
Shall their dear fragrance last.

June 1, 1865.

THE CHILD OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

THE light-house keeper said to his child,

“I must go to the mainland, dear ;

Can you stay alone till afternoon?

Quite early I hope to be here.”

She tossed back her hair with a girlish grace,

As she lifted to his a brightening face :

“Yes, father : I’ve nothing to fear.

“With Kit and Fido I’ll have fine play,

When I’ve seen your boat glide by ;

Then I’ll gather shells and sea-weed bright,

And watch the cloud-fleets in the sky.

Oh ! time will merrily glide away ;

And when you come, ere close of day,
To get a good supper I'll try."

"God keep thee, daughter," the father said,
As he drew her close to his side ;
His sun-browned hand on her golden head,
While the light skiff waited its guide.
Then in he sprung, and with arrowy flight
The little boat sped, like a sea-bird bright,
O'er the sparkling, shimmering tide.

The child stood still, on the wave-washed sand,
Baptized in sunlight clear :
The father thought, as he waved his hand,
Of another yet more dear,
Who watched him, erst, from that gleaming strand,
Whose life-bark sped to the better land,
But leaving her image here.

Quietly, cheerily, fled the hours

Of that long, bright summer day;

But lo! far westward, a storm-cloud lowers:

Its shadow is on the bay.

"Oh, father, I hope, will not set sail,

In rash attempt to weather the gale!"

She thought, as she knelt to pray.

"Then what if a ship should pass to-night?"

In anxious tone, she said;

"But can I? — yes, I *must*, strike the light."

She climbed, with cautious tread,

Up, and still up, through circling tower;

And full and clear, till dawnlight hour,

The lantern's radiance spread.

"The mist is thick: the bell must be rung."

The girlish arm was slight;

But the woman's heart to effort sprung :

And, out through dreary night,

The bell pealed forth, again and again ;

While an anxious crew, on raging main, .

Were toiling with all their might.

The morning breaks, and the storm is past ;

The keeper sets sail for home ;

His heart throbs deep, as his boat flies fast,

Amid dashing spray and foam.

She touches land ; and the chamber-stairs

Echo his footfalls, as hearts echo prayers :

He turns to his daughter's room.

No shame to his manhood that tears fall fast,

As he bends o'er the little bed ;

And wild kisses bedew the tiny hands,

Thrown wearily over her head.

For those hands have wrought a mightier deed
Than were blazoned in story or song;
And the ship, with its wealth of human life,
To-day safely rides o'er the billows' strife,
Because the child's heart was strong!

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

BETHLEHEM'S Babe, of virgin born,
Welcome we thy natal morn.
In a manger humbly laid, —
Thou whose word the heavens made;
Swaddling bands enwrap thy form, —
Thou whose way is in the storm.

See the infant Saviour crowned!
Bow in adoration round;
Bring your richest tribute here, —
Gold and frankincense and myrrh:
All are but an offering meet,
Scattered at the God-child's feet.

Bring a benison more rare:
Cast upon Him all your care.

Think ye not His mother's love
Gold and gems soared far above,
Counting them as meaner things
Than the shadow of her wings ?

Bring your spirits' virgin love,
That, like Mary's arms enfolding,
And with earnest life-clasp holding,
Shall the babe a Saviour prove ;
And in His great name go forth,
Blessing the lowliest of earth.

Sweetest incense is that faith
Counting sure all things He saith ;
And He deemeth far more dear
Than myrrh, the hope that passeth fear.
Bring ye these, with song and prayer,
And His meek acceptance share.

TO WILLIAM DENTON, ESQ.,

GEOLOGIST.

WE hail thee, Enchanter! Thou dost unroll,
To our eager gazing, a wondrous scroll;
And peopled ages of sea and land
Come slowly forth at thy magic wand.

We stand at a greater than Vulcan's forge,—
By the sea of fire, whose dark waves submerge
The very heart of our ancient earth;
And the cooling mass gives mountains birth.

Arising from countless ocean wells,
First forms of animate life, the shells,
Fête-clad in beauty, move to the measure
Of deep-toned rhythm the waters sing;

While, above the chambers of Neptune's treasure,
The fishes sport on arrowy wing.

The mighty forests for ages stand,
Till mightier wind, like magician's wand,
Levels their proud heights; and rivers roll, —
While mermaids their hieroglyphics write:
Woods tower again, and another scroll,
Years after, is graven in silence and night.

In gorgeous beauty, a tropical clime
Unfurls its scenery strange and sublime;
While mammoth and mastodon roam the land,
And with burning thirst seek the river's strand.

Then the ice-king builds his palaces fair,
Decking their white walls with tapestries rare;
Frost-robed, snow-crowned, on diamond throne,
Majestic Winter bears sway alone.

But this gives place to a balmier clime,
And man is born in fullness of time.
Still onward the march of being ascends,
If only he choose the path Christ trod,
Till mortal with angel internally blends,
Led through the universe to its God.

And the Past's ingathering of fruit and flower
Swells the Present's cornucopia of power ;
While the Future opens upon our view
A vista of freedom, beauty, and light,
That, if only to heaven our hearts are true,
Will be ours as sure as day follows night.

We have met, — we part, — but the golden hours
Will lie in our souls like herbarium flowers ;
And we clasp thy hand with a word of cheer, —
God speed thee, and give thee a happy New Year !

WATCHING FOR A SAIL.

"COME!" they are calling, "it is late!"

Still on the sands I sit and wait, —

Watch for the gleam of a distant sail;

Wait while the tide-waves ebb and flow,

Wait till the westering clouds droop low,

Till the sea rocks in the moonlight pale, —

Watch for the coming sail!

Thus sits the soul on life's wide shore,

Watching its tide-waves evermore.

Ever some precious freight they bear:

Toward or from us, with ceaseless flow.

Joy and hope and purpose go;

And, not less swiftly, pain and care.

Love, only, anchors there!

While Thought, with snowy wing spread wide,

'Mid Fancy's glistening foam will ride,

With Hope's bright banner all unrolled;

And Retrospection's wave doth flow

O'er treasured things of long ago.

Sea! by the wealth of Memory's hold,

Faint gleam thy pearls and gold!

Full many a heart awaits with me

Its loved one's coming o'er the sea,—

The sea that many a hope doth hide.

Oh! pity the souls who, on life's dim shore,

Watch for the sail that cometh no more!

Folded beneath the glistening tide,—

Nay, moored on the other side!

E'en hearts that trust, half know, half feel,
Their Father's hand about them for weal.

From shower to shine, from shine to shower,
From strife to rest, from rest to strife,
Still surges on the dream of life ;

But, when we wake, we shall know the Power
That keeps its every hour !

STANZAS.

WE'RE almost there,
And little care
For what way we came :
Or thorn or flower,
Sunshine or shower,
'Tis almost the same.

Some thorns were strown,
Some flowers have blown ;
Our skies, now dark, now blue ;
The sunshine gleamed,
The rain-drops streamed,
But only proved us true !

We would not see
What yet may be,
But for one boon we pray:
That side by side,
Love's Truth our guide,
We tread life's varied way!

A CHILD'S QUESTION.*

THE lessons all were done ;

The children on their way
To comfortable homes,

Their supper, and their play.

A little colored boy,

One of the village school,
Had sorely chidden been
For breaking some small rule.

Whether at all to blame,

Or not, we do not know ;

But patient, Christian love

Would ne'er have spoken so.

* A fact.

For words of stern rebuke
Fell on the childish heart:
"Little black scoundrel!" stung
With keenest, bitterest smart.

The children looked around,
And presently espied,
Crouching upon the ground,
Close to the river-side,

The little colored boy,
Scouring his face and hands;
Trying, to change their hue,
Water and river-sands.

But, quickly finding out
That vainly he had tried,
"Will NOTHING wash it off?"
The child, despairing, cried.

O God ! that childish voice
Blent with a people's wail !
And, though Thou tarriest long,
Thy promise shall not fail !

Not in the dusky skin
Lies really hid the stain,
But in the human souls
Where Prejudice hath lain !

And we who would not let
Thy truth shed there its ray,
Must see the nation's blood
Wash out that stain to-day !

A GREETING.

TO THE RETURNED FORTY-FOURTH AND FORTY-FIFTH MASSA-
CHUSETTS REGIMENTS.

FRIENDS, brothers, and patriots, hither we come,
Where we said our farewell, to welcome you home !

From the hour we bade you God-speed,
When you rose at your country's need,
And went forth to struggle, to do and dare, —
It might be to bleed, it might be to fall,

Only never turn back, —

With fast-throbbing hearts, with hope and prayer,
We have followed your track.

Welcome one, welcome all !

For the Star-spangled Banner ye nobly have borne
Floats above you, unspotted, this day of return !

Yet with ranks not wholly unbroken ye come ;
Some households are saddened, beclouded their
home.

'Mid our greetings, we cannot forget,
That, while we smile, some eyes are wet.

Yet, as Houston, with failing strength and breath,
The flag of his country wrapped round him in
death,

So were they true and brave !

In a cause just and holy they laid down their life.

Not vainly they suffered and bled,

Who passed from pain and strife ;

And the Star-spangled Banner, protecting, shall
wave

O'er the dreamless rest of the soldier's grave !

We loved you before, but we honor you now

For manhood and courage enstamped on your brow !

When Truth is our bright guiding-star ;
When "BREAK EVERY YOKE, AND LET GO THE
OPPRESSED !"

Is the watchword we bear on national crest,
Not in letters, but soul and deed, —
Jehovah Zebaoth will grant his behest !
Then, and then only, the land shall have rest
From the blood and anguish of war,
With peace abiding blessed !

And the Star-spangled Banner for ever shall wave
"O'er the land of the FREE and the home of the
Brave !"

TE DEUM LAUDAMUS.

O GOD! we praise Thee that the day
Thy children hoped and waited for,
While yet its promise seemed the ray
Of morning's star, far, far before,

Has brought that birth

For which the earth,

Through tears and wrong,

Has travailed long.

And unto Thee, Thou Just and Wise,

A nation's anthem mounts the skies:

Gloria in excelsis!

The Ararat of Liberty,

Spanned with the promise-bow of heavén,

Stands, 'mid Rebellion's stormy sea,
The only foot-hold God hath given!

The story old

Again is told:

O'er war's wild tides

Our ark safe rides;

And wave from off that sunlit height

Her emblem hues, — red, blue, and white!

Gloria in excelsis!

"Why criest thou to me? Go on!"

To Israel's leader came the word,

When, to the Red Sea's brink pursued,

He sought the counsel of the Lord.

On either side,

Now Slavery's pride

And Northern fear

Their dark walls rear.

But through their midst Thy freemen go,
And shout deliverance from the foe!

Gloria in excelsis!

Cotton outdid the king of old,
Demanding daily worship paid
To image wrought of beaten gold;
For *his* cement of blood was made!

Disunion's fire

Burned seven times higher:

The Truth of God

Walked, clothed and shod;

A sooty slave led through the flame,
And lo! the THING a MAN became!

Gloria in excelsis!

Oh, not a life is given in vain
In conflict for our country's good;

And dawns upon our night of pain
The morning of Man's Brotherhood!
That God is just,
And loving trust
Truer than fear,
The opening year
Writeth in characters of fire;
And whispers Hope's Æolian lyre,
Gloria in excelsis!

Feb. 2, 1865.

SONG OF THE SNOW-SPIRIT.

FLOATING down, floating down,
From midnight height,
In robe of white,
And gleaming crown,

I come, I come, tired earth to fold
In spotless covering from the cold.

Wrapped in her breast,
Her fruit and flower
May safely rest,
And wait their hour.

Silent I come, but a harp I bring,
And a gentle hand may wake its string;

Loved voices fled
Greet fancy's ear,
And summer rills
Are rippling clear.

Ye welcome me whose hearts are springing,
Through whose young dreams the bells are ringing,
With household song,
And laugh rung out,
With skater's glee
And coaster's shout.

I lay my hand on the mother's brow;
It gleams in holier beauty now.

Where children sleep
My wing I spread,
And fairy dreams
Around them shed.

To beds of pain I wend my way,
And gifts of peace and patience lay
 On weary hearts,
 That will but ope,
 And take Christ's boon
 Of rest and hope.

A soft, stainless mantle I spread above
The sleep of those who took with them but — love :
 Love, whose quick root,
 Though lost the flower,
 Shall know again
 Its blossoming hour.

To you with homes and hearth-fires bright
A thought of Christ I bring to-night.
 With an earnest hand
 I knock at your door :

Love one another !

Remember the poor !

Fare ye well ! Ye shall see me again
In bending sheaves of ripened grain.

Ye will know not me,
But I shall be
In heightened verdure
Of flower and tree ;

All that augments the farmer's store,
When harvest home surrounds his door ;
And, gliding like
A little brook
Into your hearts,
Search every nook
To find a remnant of my song,
If it perchance shall last so long.

LINES.

I'VE loved thee well, I've loved thee long,
With love that grew more deep and strong,
Through sadness and through mirth.
I gave thee all my trusting heart,
Nor vainly gave; for more thou art
To me than all of earth.

The words that holy lessons taught
My eager soul, were heaven-fraught,
As streams of healing flow :
The love and faith and hope, by thee
Nourished and guarded, pure and free,
For evermore shall glow.

And oh ! if ever at thy side
I stand thy chosen one, thy bride,
 And yield my hand to thine,
The deeper being I have borne
Shall bless thee on my bridal morn,
 And with thy own entwine !

FOR A FRIEND'S BRIDAL.

CHILDHOOD hath passed, with its sunshine and
shower,

Changeful, yet sweet, as April day;

Swiftly approaches the glad summer hour:

Life hath glided into its May.

The lip may tremble, and tears may fall,

Parting from friends most near and dear;

But love, that endures and conquers all,

Forbears to question, casts out fear.

We launch our bark on life's glistening tide,

While hope and trust burn clear and strong;

Our hearts are wedded, and God is our guide,

And prayer is blent with nuptial song.

We launch it richly freighted : all we prize
This one deep venture close enfolds,
As germ of flower or fruit in leaf-bud lies,
Or infant-form its manhood holds.

Our life's deepest love hath budded on earth ;
Its blossom and fruitage shall be
Here or hereafter, as One knoweth best, —
Our Father, we leave it with Thee !

A PRAYER.

FATHER, I praise Thee ! Bless Thou me !

Bless me, — yes, unceasingly !

As Thy love is, full and free,

Let me feel it evermore ;

Trust Thee wholly, and adore !

Let my spirit, dauntless, soar,

On the wings of faith and love,

Earth and earthly fears above,

And Thy sweet assurance prove.

Thou who wast of woman born !

Look on my maternal morn ;

Bless me from its earliest dawn !

Saviour ! who to me hast given
One to live with Thee in heaven,
Grant that, from the evil shriven,

Heart and soul may truly be
Meet to nurture up for Thee
That Thou dost intrust to me.

And may never fade away
The holy awe I feel to-day !
On Thy altar now I lay

All my life, that it may be,
With its joyous hope and free,
Consecrated unto Thee !

OUR BABY.

LITTLE baby, darling baby !
Born amid the spring-time air,
With the angel in thine eyes,
Blue as ever summer skies,
'Neath a brow of whiteness rare ;
With the gentle sunlight playing
And the fitful shadows straying
Lightly o'er thy golden hair, —
Darling baby, thou art fair !

Little baby, happy baby !
Many an hour dost thou beguile ;
Weariness and pain and care
Helping to forget or bear,

By the brightness of thy smile,
Winsome tones and gleeful playing.
Almost might we ask delaying
For thy life-bark 'mid the flowers
Of thy sportive infant hours.

Little baby, loving baby !
God hath called thee "very good" !
In His image hath He made thee,
And with innocence arrayed thee,
Germ of spotless angelhood !
Form like thine He took at birth,
Cradled, when He trod the earth,
Such as thee within His breast, —
Loving baby, thou art blessed !

Little baby, precious baby !
With thy birth a bright gift bringing ;

Angels tender watch are keeping
O'er thy waking, o'er thy sleeping,
Love's own glory round thee flinging.
Read we in thee God's evangel!
Gentle, loving, pure, and lowly,
Linked with all things true and holy,
Lovely art thou, household angel!

PATCHWORK.

MUCH I prize my garden,
Where moss-roses blow;
Jessamine and violets,
Lilies pure as snow,
Crocus bright, and daffodil
By the fountain grow.

Yet my winter garden
Shows to me as fair;
For my fancy grows it
Into flowering rare!
Pleasant recollections
Richly gathered there.

Yet it lies before *you*

But a patchwork spread,
While to *me* it opens

Aisles that Thought may tread;
And rich dewes of blessing
Seem around it shed.

See that dainty rosebud,
Snow-white circling round;
There, a tuft of daisies
On a bright pink ground;
Here, a purple heart's-ease,
With a lily bound.

These my own dear sisters
Ever call to mind,—
They, the gentle-hearted,

Faithful, frank, and kind;
Two here, and one in heaven —
All in my heart — I find.

Then a crimson star, dropped
On that soft, dark brown,
Tells me of my mother, —
Her warm breath floats down,
Though she dwells in glory,
Wreathed with angel-crown.

See that quaint old pattern,
Where looks out a deer
From a leafy covert!
That brings grandma near,
With her lips of kindness,
And her blue eyes clear.

Brown stripe and crimson palm-leaf,

Alternating there,

Show me dear, kind father,

In his easy-chair ;

And the fire-light flickers

On his silver hair.

Good-will and Peace are written

On that broad, calm brow ;

Tones of fervent blessing

Breathe above me now ;

But — my tears are stealing,

And they must not flow !

Little checks — a pink and white,

And a white and blue,

Here a purple, there a buff —

Childhood bring to view !
Ah ! well do I remember
When these all were new !

Here a dotted azure,
There a climbing vine, —
Girlhood's friend bends o'er me !
Eyes of hazel shine :
Marian, ever cherished,
Lays her hand in mine !

You know I met your brother,
First, in May morning's light ?
I wore that spray of ivy
Upon the ground of white :
Part of my wedding outfit
Were yonder patterns bright.

Ah! those pretty cambrics

Form a gladsome link;

Baby's eyes are laughing

From that dainty pink;

Blues and buffs are telling

More than I can think.

Now, dear, you see my garden's

A very precious thing;

For 'mid its fragrant blossoms

Love roams on Fancy's wing;

And, though out-doors it's snowing,

Here I have always spring!

BENEDICITE !

SINLESS little baby !

Blessing, shall I bless thee?

What shall I say to thee?

God be with thee?

Ah, more near,

Baby dear,

Thou than I :

Yet the angel in thine eyes

To my frail desiring,

To my weak aspiring,

Maketh sweet replies.

God keep thee, darling baby !

Only *keep thee just as near*

As now, I will not fear :
No harm shall touch thee ;
Blessing, thou dost bless me
With a heavenly joy,
New thoughts true and holy,
Pure affection lowly,
Wakened power of feeling,
And a breath of healing,
Blue-eyed boy !

Babe God-given !
Type of heaven !
What art thou to thy mother ?
Rest for her weariness ;
Joy 'mid life's dreariness ;
Comfort sure when all other
Fails at demand ;
For weakness a strength ;

To pain a relief;
Binding the hours
In a golden sheaf,
 With thy tiny hand;
Hope for the future,
 When clouds are rife;
Flower, gem, and beauty,
 Sunshine of life !

THE WHEAT-SHEAF.

THE autumn breezes stirred the grain,
Bound, ready for the farmer's wain.

Elliot through the wheat-fields strayed:
Suddenly his steps were stayed.

For, fast asleep upon the ground,
Behind a bending sheaf, he found

A blue-eyed girl, some four years old,
With curling hair of burnished gold.

"Hurrah! what's this?" he thoughtless said.

The child awoke, and, half afraid

And half inquiring, met his eye:

The tiny lip was curled to cry.

He gently took her on his arm,
And tried to quiet her alarm.

"Now tell me, darling, what's your name,
And how it was you hither came."

"Lilian Irving," said the child;
Her fear was banished, and she smiled.

"I've been playing all the day,
Till my kitten ran away.

"Then the pretty brook I crossed,
For I thought she would be lost.

"And I hunted all around;
But no kitty have I found.

"Then I did not know my way:
I was tired, and down I lay."

"Tell me where you live," he said;
But she only shook her head.

"Never mind: you're safe with me.
I'll find your mother, as you'll see."

Some one whom he questioned then
Said, "The cottage in the glen."

Through the lane, and past the mill,
Then across the singing rill,

He carried Lilian to the door
Where the woodbine clambered o'er.

Thrilled by anxious, grieving thought,
For her child the mother sought.

With a burst of joyful weeping,
Clasped her to her own heart's keeping.

Kitty had come home before,
And the child's delight ran o'er.

Elliot traced his homeward way,
Thinking, "What a lovely day!"

For the glancing sunshine seemed
Brighter than it erst had gleamed.

Sweeter bloomed the wayside flowers,
As if brought from Eden bowers.

And a gentler breeze swept by,
Laden with bird-melody.

'Tis harvest-time. In years now flown,
The child to womanhood has grown.

And Elliot's youth has given place
To manhood's strength and calmer grace.

They wend their way across the rill,
Then through the lane, and past the mill.

And, where the sheaves of ripened grain
Stand ready for the farmer's wain,

Elliot's arm, round Lilian pressed,
Draws her to his manly breast.

"Once I led you, darling, home :
Will you to my bosom come ?

"Take the home that waits you there ;
Share my labor and my prayer ?

"For ever in my heart enshrined,
Thy gentle hand my life-sheaf bind ?"

Lilian lifts her azure eyes,
And they give him true replies.

THE PET DOVE.

It was a glorious summer day,
When Linda, in the woods at play,
Found a young cushat-dove;
With broken wing, he, trembling, lay
On mossy couch beside her way;
His meek eyes touched her love.

She gently raised him from the ground;
She took him home, and nursed his wound,
And fed him with fond care.
Erelong, his broken wing grew well,
And he had learned her step to tell,
Her place at meals to share.

For he would on her shoulder light,
And many a crumb and dainty bite

She gave her gentle pet.

"Snow-flake" she named the pretty bird,
And he would heed her lightest word,
Nor did her care forget.

And, though he often flew away,
He always came at close of day,

If not awhile before ;

And, tapping on the window-pane,
Would ask to be let in again,
Or fly through open door.

There came a day, the house was still ;
A little child lay very ill,
And watched by anxious eyes ;

The weary dove flew round and round :
His gentle friend could not be found,
Nor hear his pleading cries.

"Mother," she said, "please raise the sash,
That I may feel the cool winds dash
Across my aching brow."

The curtain fluttered in the breeze ;
The sunlight glistened through the trees :
White wings waved to and fro.

And with a low, soft, joyous note
Swelling the tiny, ruffled throat,
He flew down to her breast ;
And, brooding that kind heart above,
Gave her back, truly, love for love,
And thus she went to rest.

Not the dread sleep the watchers thought,
But one with healing influence fraught;
And while, in grateful prayer,
The mother bowed beside the bed,
She felt Christ's love in blessing shed:
The Dove of Peace was there!

STANZAS.

Love's tones are breathing
Over me now ;
Hope's buds are wreathing
Around my brow ;
Faith in the beautiful,
Joyous, and free,
Blends with and brightens
My thoughts of thee.

On the deep waters
Our bark we cast ;
O'er the green places
Of glad hours past

One fond look we throw,
 Regretting them not;
For the future holds
 A brighter spot.

Homeward we'll sail,
 Trusting for ever:
One heart shall not fail!
 One eye slumbers never!
That eye be our guide,
 That heart be our stay!
Thus shall we abide
 In love alway!

A THOUGHT.

THE autumn sun is shining bright,
Through woods of golden-green;
And dancing, glistening, in its light,
The rippling brook is seen.

A little hand is clasped in mine,
Small feet beside me stray;
As down the lane, this Sabbath eve,
I take my quiet way.

The boy's clear laughter echoes wide
Through all the woodland nook,
While oak-leaves brown, for "fishes," glide
Adown the tiny brook.

And, with a slender forest-twigg,
To stop their course he tries;
Then, "Mamma, see, an old man's here!"
In mimicry he cries.

The tiny hand now grasps a cane;
The bowing form and head,
And motion slow, are copied all,
With weak and wavering tread.

O darling! should the 'snows of Time
Come drifting o'er thy brow,
God grant thee then to keep a heart
As innocent as now!

THE SNOW-BIRD.

ONE Christmas morn, long years ago,
(Woods, hills, and fields were white with snow,)

Down flew a birdling to my breast,
And claimed it as her rightful nest.

We gave her welcome, glad and true;
Love's language even birdie knew.

And since that time our pleasant hearth,
In hours of sadness, hours of mirth,

Has brighter, warmer, cheerier shone,
For little Snow-Bird all our own.

We thought that she would always stay,
And gladden all our homeward way.

But we forgot her folded wings,
And only said, She sweetly sings!

A fear, a dread, is wakened now;
A shadow rests upon each brow.

Her longing eyes still upward turn,
Where sunsets gleam and star-fires burn.

Her spotless pinions seem half spread, —
Oh! must we say indeed, "She's fled"?

Father! we know beyond the skies
Her lasting home in beauty lies.

But ah! we fain would keep her yet,
Till our own day of life shall set.

May not her white wing fold again?
Thou knowest! We will not complain.

Yes : shield her from the arrow's flight!
Save her a lonely, cheerless night!

And keep her pure from earthly stain,
Albeit her safety cost our pain!

Wide open stands the pearly gate!
In faith and prayer, Thy will we wait!

When comes, in Thy good time, the day
That Thou shalt call our bird away,

Oh! let us catch, if waiting here,
Thrilled by an earthly grief and fear,
The radiance of her starry eyes,
Their love-light, as she upward flies;

And ere she settles in that nest,
Hear her clear warble, "It is best!"

And sometimes let her come again,
To soothe our worn hearts' weary pain,

And let the touch of her soft wing
A holy benediction bring!

A CRADLE SONG.

GOOD-NIGHT, my tiny flower, good-night!

Thy pearly petals fold,
And nestle closely in my breast,
To shield thee from the cold.

Good-night, my gentle bird, good-night!

My cooing, white-winged dove!
Fold thy tired pinions on my heart,
And rest thee in my love.

Our darling baby, household joy,

Our cherished one, good-night!
Thy guard be angels, precious boy!
Thy shield, Jehovah's might!

RESPONSIBILITY.

You think I realize it not,
Because to none I breathe the thought;
But that lies silent in my soul,
Which with intensest power is fraught.

Responsibility, I know,
Enfolds us like the air and light.
It rests with us to help and guard,
But not in mortal skill or might.

God's gifts are plentiful and free, —
Wisdom to guide, strength to sustain:
'Tis but neglect, self-trust, or fear
That makes the burden and the pain.

'Tis ours to do, endure, and trust:

To save lies in Jehovah's power.

"Take thou this child, and nurse for Me,

And I will give the heavenly dower."

MARION'S REPLY.

"WHAT shall I bring you, daughter?"

The father asked his child,
Ere crossing the Atlantic;
And in his face she smiled.

The look of her dead mother
Is in her lifted eyes:

"Bring me yourself, dear father,"
The sweet-toned voice replies.

A sunny day is beaming;
The bark weighs anchor free,
And joyously bounds outward,
Fair type of liberty.

Young hopes, bright thoughts, go with her,
Light hearts and faces glad;
And thousand memories throng her,
Pleasant and dear and sad.

Some true, deep souls are striving
Calmly to bear their pain,
Saying, "Farewell," to dear ones
They *hope* to meet again.

Ah! who shall sound the current
Of all that hidden life,
Linked with the hearts she beareth,
With joy and sorrow rife?

When roseate morn is flushing
The waves with crimson light,
And thoughts of home are rushing
Like sea-birds' arrowy flight,—

When Night her star-gemmed mantle
Spreads o'er her children's rest,
What think you lieth deepest
Within one human breast?

Perchance the young wife's eyelids,
Now closed in lasting sleep,
Flash upward to his yearning,
And make his pulses leap.

And then on Memory's tablet
His daughters' forms arise:
The soul of the buried mother
Looks through the childish eyes.

Her gentle tones are breathing
Through their young voices clear:
"Bring me yourself, dear father,"
Comes softly to his ear.

A prosperous voyage is given ;
The steamer touches land ;
Her starry flag is floating
Above a foreign strand.

As, one by one, he treasures
Mementos she will prize,
He thinks of Marion's asking,
The light within her eyes.

Hope paints the look of pleasure
With which his gifts she'll view,
When he shall say, "Here, darling,
Am I, and keepsakes too!"

Clear westward breezes swelling,
The vessel quits the strand ;
While through glad hearts goes thrilling
The thought of native land.

Cape Race is nearly rounded ;

But, God of heaven, that shock !

The steamer's surely grounded !

She's struck a hidden rock !

And lips unused to praying

Call unto God in fear ;

While souls that calmly trust Him,

In silence *feel* Him near.

Amid the dread and anguish

Of that slow-fleeting hour,

The loving, childish pleading

Comes home with deepest power.

But "God be praised, we're nearing

Newfoundland ! Danger's past !

Now cease your weary pumping :

The shore is gained at last !"

Home ! home ! Ay, cast your anchor !

The very wharf seems golden ;
And doubly dear the faces
By glad eyes now beholden !

The father meets the shining
Of love-lit looks again ;
And, in the young arms' twining,
Is paid for all his pain.

And who shall say the child-prayer
Was not around his way,
A talisman from danger,
Guarding him night and day ?

Again : who says the child-thought
Could not with angel's blend ?
The mother to her darling
Her own prayer might not lend ?

Amid the hush of twilight,
A gentle spirit-tone,
Craving, *in heaven*, a blessing,
May reach his ear alone.

"Bring me thyself, my husband!"

And can he will to stray,
With her dear influence round him,
From out the heavenward way?

A GUEST.

A LITTLE bird lights at thy door,
One that has been there before,
Waiting all the livelong day,
Tapping gently; hear her say,
"Prithee, prithee, let me come
To thy heart and to thy home."

'Tis no bird of brilliant dyes,
Clarion song, or rainbow eyes,
But a quiet brown-clad thing,
With no wild, far-soaring wing;
And the place she liketh best
Is her nestling in thy breast.

Yet one treasure can she bring,
'Neath the shelter of her wing,—

A brighter bird, with joyous note
Bursting from his tiny throat;
Golden-plumed and starry-eyed,
Ever happiest at thy side.

Do not turn thy bird away,
Though she sings an humble lay;
For her flight may not be long,—
Brief, at most, will be her song;
Bright the spirit-land awaits,
But, before she pass its gates,

She would sing to thee awhile,
And, with love's low notes, beguile
Hours of weariness and pain;
Through the sunshine, through the rain,
Ever singing at thy side:
Prithee, let her there abide!

THE ROSE-BUSH.

"LURA, a birthday gift I bring,

A rose of deepest red :

Will you accept my offering ?"

Young Claremont, eager, said.

The sky was blue, without a cloud,

And earth was fair to see ;

The little birds sang sweet and loud ;

The breeze swept cheerily.

And Lura on the threshold stood,

A child of beauty rare,

Just verging into womanhood,

Fresh from the dew of prayer ;

And, glad and grateful, took the rose.

Half serious, half in jest,

The fairest bud of all he chose,

And placed it on her breast.

"Wilt wear it when the fête is gay,

To-night, for love of me?"

She, smiling, turned her face away,

And answered, "You shall see."



Three years have fled: the boy is gone,

With hopeful soul and brave,

To fight beneath the Stars that speak

Of freedom to the slave!

Fair Lura plies her needle swift,

The soldier's wants to meet;

And blooms beside her, all the while,
Her red rose, bright and sweet.

The wounded soldier wearily
Lies on his stranger bed ;
And with rose-water fresh they lave
His burning, aching head.

Had he but known it was prepared
By Lura's thoughtful care !
He knew it all when home he came,
And found the rose-bush bare.

Myrtle and roses fair abound,
Another morn in May ;
And Lura, with them fitly crowned,
Gives heart and hand away !

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

WHAT shall I ask for thee, Fanny?

What shall I ask for thee?

That thy life may flow on ever,

Like rippling summer sea?

That flowers entwine thy forehead,

But never wound thee a thorn;

And length of days bear with it

The gladness of childhood's morn?

This cannot be, I know, Fanny:

I ask not it should be.

Sorrows have touched thee already;

More *may* yet fall to thee;

But only, we know, in mercy
Our hearts are allowed to bleed,
That they may be cleansed from evil,
And given the strength they need.

Then what shall I ask, dear Fanny?
What shall I ask for thee?
The priceless love of a Saviour,
To dwell with thee constantly :
Thy trust in that love be fervent ;
Thy hope an anchor sure ;
Love to the Lord and thy neighbor
Through all thy life endure.

Whate'er may be thy lot, Fanny,
The griefs and joys that come,
Like angel-hands shall meet thee,
Lead to thy Father's home.

With a calm strength be thou girdled,—
The strength of the Mighty One,—
To labor in His vineyard;
And, when thy toil is done,
His fulness of blessing crown thee,
And dwell thou near His throne!

June, 1860.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

FATHER, I bless Thee that my baby lies

Beside me now,

With but the dew of slumber on his eyes,

And radiant brow !

I bless Thee that as yet our hearts are spared

A life-long grief ;

That in our field the Reapers have not paused

To bind their sheaf !

And yet, by every smile our baby wears,

And sportive grace,

His cooing tones that charm away our cares,

Bid pain give place ;

By all the beauty, love, and joy he brings

To bless our hearts,

We measure best the shadow sorrow flings

When one departs.

By our own dread of that which passed our lips,

A bitter cup,

We feel what they must suffer who are called

To give them up.

By the deep well-spring wakened in our souls,

We learn love's power ;

And know that mortal strength must fail to stand

In such an hour.

For them, for us, Thy love is still the same :

The light and shade

Are but the varied leadings of that care

For which we've prayed.

And other paths of grief our feet have pressed

They have not known :

Lead them, dear Lord, to find relief and rest

In Thee alone.

With promise and assurance cometh pain,

Thy seal of love ; *

We well believe that Thou dost not in vain

Our hearts thus prove.

* Rev. iii. 19.

GRANDPA.

GRANDPA, dost thou ever come
To the spot that was thy home ?

Nay, not now, I ween.
Changed are all things since the day
That thy spirit passed away ;
Naught of thee is seen.

Once thy presence lingering,
Like the breath of flowers in spring,
Silently we felt :
Richer hues the sunset wore,
Watched from casement or from door,
Where thy form had dwelt.

Hearts there are, remaining true,
But they little have to do
 With the present scene ;
Yet, to love that does not fail,
Faith is given to pierce the veil
 Lying yet between.

And our tender recollections,
Garnered up by deep affections,
 Blend with future hope :
We shall meet thee in the land
Where, without one broken band,
 Spirit life hath scope !

Would we have thee here again ?
Mortal, bound to earthly pain ?

 Angels brought release !
Better, too, thou shouldst not know
What would only cause thee woe.

 Christ hath whispered, Peace !

OUR LILY.

A YOUNG, fair flower, a Lily white,
 Within our home,
Spread her pure petals to the light,
 In fragrant bloom.

We nursed and watched, and hour by hour
 Fresh beauty grew,
With sunshine's kiss, and baptism
 Of heaven's dew.

One morning came an angel-guest
 Our threshold o'er,
And, with our Lily on his breast,
 Passed from the door.

Our passionate tears, our pleading wild,

They had no might:

He raised his hand, and, pitying, smiled, —

Then took his flight.

'Tis hard for even faith to say

That it is well;

But we shall *know* it, when once more

With her we dwell.

What might have been we may not know

If she had stayed:

Perchance our earth had kept for her

Less light than shade.

For ever safe from storm and blight,

Our cherished flower

Unfolds her petals, pearly white,

In heaven's bower.

Two buds, by tie of sisterhood
Close linked with heaven,
Still cheer our home, and soothe the hearts
By sorrow riven.

We all shall reach our Father's home
In His good hour;
And there, even sweeter, lovelier grown,
We'll find our flower!

FEBRUARY 29.

LAY down the hoary head,
And loose thy hold!
The hand pressed last in thine
Is growing cold.
And close the eyes that never more
Shall meet thy own;
Seal, with one lingering kiss, the lips
That breathed love's tone.

Lay down the hoary head;
For angels wait;
And let them waft the soul
To heaven's gate:

But, ah ! one sunbeam let them fling,
The while they soar,
From off their shining, silver wing,
Thy forehead o'er.

It came, thou truest friend :

It still is there.

Hath it not lit thy way,

Helped thee to bear ?

The memories of the olden time,

That else were pain, —

Are they not blent with glorious hope

To meet again ?

That hour a link entwined

In the bright chain

That heart to heart must bind,

Through joy or pain.

By all thy tender thought of him,

Who loved me well,

I plead for some place in thy heart,

Always to dwell!

A GERMAN LEGEND.

"Now, mother dear,
Bend down your ear,
Close, close to me ;
And I will tell
Of what befell

While in the forest, gathering twigs for thee.

"Adown the glade,
In white arrayed,
A child drew nigh,
All wondrous fair,
With shining hair,

Rose lips, and eyes blue as our summer sky.

“Fain would he share,
And help me bear
My burden home;
Then sped away, —
Nor could I say

Whither he went, or whence, as swift, had come.

“The forest way
I took to-day,
Nor far did roam;
This perfume-fraught
Red rose he brought,

And said, ‘When this shall bloom, again I’ll
come.’

“Now, mother dear,
Bring water clear,
And fill my vase;

Then, while I sleep,
Please, will you keep
The bud beside me? Yes, that is the place.

“You only thought
Dream-fancies wrought
On me last night;
Yet proves this flower
My waking-hour;
But wait one moment ere you take the light.

“Now closer fold
Me; longer hold;
Again, good-night!”
When morning broke,
The mother woke:—
The Rose flowered full, the Child lay still and white!

Yet, while you grieve,
Oh, well believe

Your risen boy
Now wears the rose
Christ's garden grows,
Beside the river of eternal joy!

All clad in white,
Through paths of light,
Child-angels roam;
With love's intent,
On uses bent
Not least to those they left in earthly home.

Then gently lay
That form away,
Red rose in hand;
But keep thy life
Pure from sin's strife,
And thou shalt meet him in the better land.

MOTHER AND BABE.

YES, lay her gently down ;

Clasp the still hands upon the pulseless breast ;

Fold her in bridal robes, to dreamless rest,

With myrtle crown.

She is thy spirit-bride ;

And she hath laid her mortal vesture by,

That she may be to thee more truly nigh,

Thy angel-guide.

She walketh by thy side :

Possess thy soul in patience ! Let the love,

That made you one, all doubt, all fear, remove,

Though sorely tried.

Blessed art thou, in this hour
Of mighty suffering, if thy heart can bring
Unto the Christ a willing offering, —

Thy young, fair flower,

And tender bud new-blown;
Immortal lily-fragrance shall they breathe
Upon the Saviour's breast, and closely wreath
Around thy own.

Weep, but with holy tears;
So shall thy spirit gently chastened be,
And thy heart-angels gladly strengthen thee
For coming years.

Oh! as a sacred shield
Wear thy deep sorrow, and thou shalt have part
In her high rest, if never doth thy heart
To evil yield!

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

THRICE welcome, Saviour Christ!

We worship in thy love, —

Thy holy love, shrined in an infant form.

Why wert Thou from above

Of mortal woman born,

Knowing that Thou shouldst meet a dark world's
scorn?

It was that Thou wast Love,

We loveless; that Thy feet

Earth's roughest paths, weary and bleeding,
pressed,

And Thy long-suffering dove

Is seeking in our breast
A secret chamber of abiding rest.

Enter, all-patient One !
Who in Thy breast hast borne
The anguish of a world ; the cross of shame,
That bore Thee, fainting, down,
And sorrow's thorny crown
Have gathered brightness from Thy radiant name.

The cup of agony
Passed not away ; for, lo !
One loving bosom bore the mingled flow
Of infant tears and blood,
Emblem of coming woe,
'Mid olive-shades, and on dark Calvary's brow.

Thou who didst bear all this,
That Thou mightst sin remove,

Give Thy own birth *within our spirits* now;
Teach us Thy mighty love,
While at Thy feet we bow,
That we may seek and save the lost, as Thou!

Only as little ones,
Saviour, may we be Thine!
Fold our worn spirits in Thy bosom now,
With arms of truth divine;
Girdle our souls with power,
That we may bear with Thee life's darkest hour!

Saviour, what shall we bring,
A pleasant offering?
In temples made with hands Thou dost not dwell;
But with the pure in heart,
Who see Thee as Thou art,
Imparting deeper joy than tongue can tell.

We bring repentant love,
From Thy own bosom born;
With childlike faith, and hope that anchor proves!
Thy sacrificial cross
Deep on our hearts is worn;
Thy passion's emblems church and home adorn!

R E S T.

STILL she lies,
On her eyes
Breathless slumber brooding ;
Wreathèd brow
Touched not now
By pain or grief intruding.

Calmly pressed
On her breast,
Hands that well life's task have done.
That 'twas brief
Is *our* grief,
But *her* perfect rest is won.

Lightly tread :
She's not dead, —
Only in her beauty sleeping ;
And in heaven
Waking's given, —
Angels round her watch are keeping.

Snows are falling,
Winds are calling,
As deep calleth unto deep.
Lightly tread :
She's not dead, —
Let her with her baby sleep.

Lay her down,
With her crown
And her folding robe, below ;
Covering,
Like the wing
Of a sea-bird, spotless snow !

THE AMULET.

"SAVIOUR Christ, be Thou my Stay;
On my heart Thy own peace lay;
Guide me through the shadowy way.

"All the path to Thee is known,
And I look to Thee alone:
In life and death, Thee, Lord, I own!"

Where the breeze and sunlight strayed
Through the blossoming lindens' shade,
Thus the wife and mother prayed.

Ernest knelt beside her bed;
She laid her hand upon his head;
Gently, entreatingly, she said:

"A boon thy mother asks thee, son,
In this still hour, — she needs but one, —
Ere she shall say, My life-work's done.

"Promise me, that, however pressed
By care or labor, or distressed,
Or howsoe'er thou mayst be blessed,

"Thou wilt not let the day's swift flight
Exchange for calm and awful night,
And this again for morning's light,

"When angels may not of thee say,
'The Holy Word he reads to-day:
A wall of fire shall guard his way.'

"Even if but a single line,
Remember, it is all DIVINE:

Receive it, and the Christ is thine."

"Mother, I promise;" and the word
The waiting angels, joyful, heard:
Its record lay before the Lord.

The hour was come: where she had dwelt,
His very soul in anguish knelt;
Her hand upon his head he felt.

"Thou knowest not, but thou shalt know:
I am the life!" The gentle flow
Of heavenly comfort calmed his woe.

Another love awoke in power,—
The love that brings life's richest dower;
And hope and trust entwined a bower.

But in its midst there stood a shrine,
And on it lay the Word Divine:
"Not twain, but one; and ye are mine."

The home was filled with infant glee;
Then a kind voice said, solemnly,
"Take thou this child, and nurse for me."

A worldly wealth were gained if sought
By injury to neighbor wrought;
"Love as thyself," the evil fought.

He lay upon a bed of pain;
And o'er him swept, once and again,
The cadence of an angel-strain.

The fragrance of the summer breeze
Bore to his heart such words as these:—
"Come unto me: I'll give thee ease."

A rest his spirit found indeed,
That compensated earthly need,—
The life of heaven in its seed.

Years fled; and from the household band
A little one an angel's hand
Led gently to the better land.

Then "Suffer such to come to me,"
A Saviour's voice breathed tenderly,
Down to the depths of agony.

Thus, on through all life's varied way,
That word was a support and stay,
"A fire by night, a cloud by day."

And, when the angels came to bear
His soul their blessed home to share,
He calmly breathed his mother's prayer:—

"Saviour Christ, be Thou my stay;
On my heart Thy own peace lay;
Guide me through the shadowy way.

"All the path to Thee is known,

And I look to Thee alone:

In life and death, Thee, Lord, I own."

SHADOW AND LIGHT.

IN her young innocence lay down
The child that slumbered on thy breast :
She rose, to take her harp and crown
Among the blessed.

And, if thy soul a cross must bear,
With roses shall it be entwined :
They who a Saviour's suffering share,
His joy shall find !

Yet not amid the tempest's roar
We seek the treasures of the deep ;
But find them, scattered on the shore,
When billows sleep.

Poor heart, by mighty sorrow rift,
Thy cherished one Christ asks of thee.
Thou know'st not now: *we* cannot lift
The veil for thee.

But thou shalt know; mayst now be sure,
Whose name is love can do no wrong:
The hand that led thy darling home
Will make thee strong.

'Twas morning; but thou knowest not
What bitter cup she might have drained,
If till the weary noontide hour
Had she remained.

Pain, grief, temptation, might have pressed,
Like mountain torrents, on her way;
Life's discipline were hers at best:
'Tis passed away!

Hereafter, when unveiled to see
Thy guardian angel's form of grace,
Thine eyes' rapt gaze may give to thee
Thy daughter's face.

Though dark the night and rough the way,
Bethink thee, it will not be long :
It endeth in the perfect day,
And angel throng.

There shalt thou clasp her to thy breast,
With praise that God allowed the grief
Which, all in secret, bound for thee
A golden sheaf.

A HYMN.

OUR hearts are sore ;
For grief is o'er them as a mantle cast :
A cherished form is from our household passed, —
Returns no more.

To Thee we bow,
Whose bleeding feet the wine-press trod alone ;
On Thy great sorrow hast Thou built Thy throne ;
Thy thorn-crowned brow

Bends low to ours,
To strengthen us our lighter cross to bear :
Who share Thy baptism shall Thy glory wear ;
Thorns change to flowers.

Not wholly gone !

Our loved one only laid her garments down,
To walk with Thee in white, with harp and crown,
And love, love on.

We will not faint :

Albeit too high floats out her angel-song,
To catch the murmurs of earth's strife and wrong ;
Yet *our* complaint

Her hand might stay ;

For, in the fulness of angelic love,
Around and with us, not alone above,

She guards our way.

THE WISH.

FAIR rose the home that crowned the hill,
Where flowed the river, calm and still.

The breeze and sunlight played between
Bright leaves of crimson, gold, and green.

Bees hummed; birds warbled; field and wood
Seemed all to whisper, "Very good."

Yet would a music far more sweet
Than sound of bird or waters greet

The ear attuned to household mirth:
A bright-eyed baby there had birth,—

A mother's star of hope, her flower,
The sunshine of her life's brief hour.

Only a few bright months had flown,
Since she a mother's joy had known.

They laid her down, in dreamless rest,
With pure white lilies on her breast.

Her husband hid his anguished heart,
To bear in life an earnest part;

While love, that deep through suffering grew,
Around his babe its tendrils threw.

His sister nursed the little one.

Her loving smile, her gentle tone,

Were like the mother's. Baby Floy
Soon hailed her coming step with joy,

And clung to her by night and day, —
While grandma thought her "in the way."

"I wish the house sometimes were still:
I do declare, it suits me ill,

"Here, at my age, to have a child
Now crying, then in play as wild

"As ever titmouse on the wing.
Oh dear! I wish she wouldn't sing!

"To raise one family's enough,"
Said the old lady in a huff.

SHE HAD HER WISH: there came a day
That angels bore the child away.

No broken playthings strewed the floor;
No need to guard the open door;

No small feet pattered on the stair,
Or hourly wants required a care.

Her words came back, with bitter thrill;
For, ah! the home was all TOO STILL!

SUPPLICATION.

LONELY and sad and sore,
My spirit turns to Thee!
Sustain me evermore;
Set me from evil free;
Thou who hast been my All
When glad love filled my breast,
List to my feeble call,
Desolate and oppressed!

Saviour, to Thee alone
The depth of agony,
The buried hope, is known:
My Refuge, Comfort, be!

Thy conscious presence filling
All glad hours, made them thine :
Be Thy power felt in stilling
The worn heart at Thy shrine !

Thou who hast borne all grief,
Truly abide with me !
I ask not full relief,
But to endure like Thee !
Oh ! not, dear Lord, to take away
The bitter cup I drink :
Only my fainting form to stay,
Lest 'mid the waves I sink.

THE ANTIDOTE.

WITH folded arms and furrowed brow,
The man beside his work-bench stood ;
While fearful conflict waged between
The powers of evil and of good.

A cottage home, a loving wife,
And children, in their sinless joy,
Had made an Eden of his life,
Ere came the wine-cup to destroy.

Base appetite for long has swayed
A mind and body grandly planned,
When, lo ! his mad career is stayed,
Broken as if by angel-hand.

For one who knew a Saviour's love,
And, like Him, for the lost ones sought,
Has found the door in that poor heart,
And roused the spirit sin-distraught.

Athwart the darkness of his soul,
Like moonlight o'er the face of night,
The waves of mercy seemed to roll :
The Pledge unfurled its banner white !

The day-star on the wife's soul rose ;
His children ceased to fear his tread ;
And, as of old, at daylight's close,
The Word of God's deep love was read.

But, ah ! the old temptations pressed,
The burning thirst awoke again :
Like one of evil powers possessed,
Its fever ran through every vein.

Amid conflicting waves of thought,
And clamor of intense desire,
He stood with spirit sore distraught,
With lips compressed and eye of fire.

The balance trembled in that hour
Between eternal life and death :
While fiends exulted in their power,
His guardian angels held their breath.

A tiny hand is on his arm :
"Papa," said his little daughter,
"You are very tired and warm :
Wont you have some clear, cold water ?"

Eager and faint, he grasped the cup,
And drained it of its crystal wealth ;
Then caught the little angel up,
Through her restored to peace and health.

Her wondering eyes met grateful tears,
Warm kisses rained upon her brow :
Cold water, in all coming years,
Shall guard him from a broken vow !

Thrice-blessèd children ! In the power,
Of innocence and truth and love,
They walk with us in life's dark hour,
And our home-guarding angels prove.

NOT TO THYSELF.

WHAT if but a stricken heart,
A weary frame, be thine?
Rise above the earthly part,
Live more in the divine;
Stretch forth thy hands to all that need,
Though thy own life's a broken reed.

Not for thyself alone
Was given thee mortal birth.
A suffering, thorn-crowned One
Hath trod the paths of earth;
With bleeding feet He marked His way,
And bore the cross that in it lay!

By His all-holy life,
He hath taught thee to live;
Through sorrow, pain, and strife,
To bear and to forgive.

Grasp, for His sake, the thorn-branch in thy way :
His love shall change it to an olive-spray.

ABSENT.

FATHER in heaven, to Thee alone
The burden of my life is known,—
 Its height and depth of pain!
I see not through the way I go:
Only Thy guiding hand I know,—
 Thy love that can sustain.

And that which seemeth dark and sad
Is verging toward the bright and glad,
 In Thy own better land.
Perchance, too, grief shall pass away,
While amid earthly scenes I stay,
 As waves roll from the strand.

But if this may not be, whate'er
The years that lie between may bear
Of shadow or of light, —
When, in the last hour's deep revealing,
Thy white-robed angel comes with healing,
To prove love's wakened might;

Then be my latest earthly rest
Close folded on my husband's breast,
His love-seal on my brow.
I meet heaven's sunshine in his eyes,
Heaven's music in his low replies:
For this I ask Thee now.

NIGHT-HYMN.

FATHER, I bless Thee for the brooding night,

Like, in her holy stillness, unto Thee!

For thoughts that, waking 'neath the stars' pale
light,

White-winged and free,

To Thee aspire;

And, for the living fire

Of rapt affection, hallowed by the power

Of shadowy influence which mystic night

Draweth within her soul-unveiling hour;

For gentle rest,

And visions bright

That foster in our breast

Remembrance sweet of our most cherished ones,
Who walk with Thee in white,
Where shall be no more night.

Redeeming Lord, I bless Thee,
That when lone sorrow spreads her mantle o'er
Our weary souls, and stricken hearts grow sore,
Thy holy stars through that dark curtain shine!
Thy spirit whispers, they who would be Thine,
In Thy own baptism, as of old, must bow.

Oh! nearest then art Thou,
Atoning One, through grief perfecting power!
Did not heaven's gems pale to behold the hour
Of thy great agony and garden-prayer?
Thoughts of Thy suffering shall dispel our care,
And nerve our souls their lighter cross to bear.

Thou Sorrow-glorified,
I bless Thee for the night
Of Thy all-conquering might.

Saviour, with us abide,
When stars are hid, and o'er our trembling souls
The torrent of the garden-cedar* rolls;
And, where Thy form was bound, they, grief-
worn, lie.

Let the dear angel of Thy truth be nigh:

And perfect in Thy love
Our consecration-hour,
That, when our faith is tried,
It may unfailing prove
A birthright dower.

Then shall Thy stars give holier revealing,
And o'er our spirits waft Thy breath of healing:
The same great love that rocks the sparrow's nest
Folds its broad wing above Thy children's rest.

I bless Thee who art Love!

* Literal from the Greek.

A SOJOURNER.

SHE trod earth's varied paths for long,
A form of light, with tender grace ;
With gentle eyes and radiant face ;
A spirit pure, through suffering strong.

She wore a robe of spotless white ;
Moss-rosebuds gleaming, fresh and fair,
Twined with her golden waves of hair,
(A crown not thornless, though so bright).

She roamed the silver lake beside,
The broad, blue river, rippling rills ;
O'er mist-enwrapped and wood-crowned hills ;
Through waving grain-fields, fair and wide.

In all she traced a Father's care :
In earth's green lap, and stars above,
The tokens of a Father's love ;
And daily use made one with prayer.

The beautiful and glad and free,
In all around, she deeply wrought
With strength of feeling, power of thought,
And hope, and joy of life and thee !—

Thee, for whom consecrate were all
The fragrance and the dews of morn ;
The noontide glory, starlight born ;
And gentle hush of twilight's fall.

The joy of living in thy life,
One with thy thought and soul and heart,
Time nor eternity can part,
Made all her world with beauty rife.

From out this beauty, joy, and power,
A fruit, a glorious fruit, burst forth;
White wings of angels touched the earth;
And Christ's own blessing sealed the hour.

Where one had held all things before,
Another, and another life,
Press on, without a shade of strife, —
Each only opes another door.

One clasping all, and all in one,
With added fruitage, rich and fair,
New blessing greater than its care,
The smaller forms and lighter tone.

In paths of living green to guide
The tender feet, by waters pure;
And aid life's conflict to endure, —
With all of soul and strength she tried.

Patient, she kept her homeward way.

A whisper caught her listening ear :

She bent her head, the word to hear,

And round her shone unclouded day !

The Dove of Peace came swiftly down :

With eyes unsealed, she saw heaven's bowers !

Her moss-buds bloomed, immortal flowers ;

And, lo ! the thorns dropped from her crown !

"I came forth from the Father's breast," —

Thus ran the story of her birth, —

"His mission to fulfil on earth,

And find in Him my lasting rest."

A glad Te Deum swelled above,

And rolled in waves of joy around :

The spirit's name the angels found, —

His own — the holiest — even Love !



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THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY

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